IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 9, 17, 18 and 23, cancel claims 20 and 22, and add new claims 24 and 25 as follows:

1   Claim 1. (currently amended) An information providing method for a
2   network, for providing, via a network, content that constitutes an entire
3   body of information based on conditions that are defined in advance,
4   comprising the steps of:
5   generating a finite number of intermediate contents for content that
6   corresponds to an entire body of information, wherein said intermediate
7   contents are hieratically structured according to ~~an amount of information~~
8   ~~content~~ the number of pages contained therein;
9   assigning each of said finite number of intermediate contents an
10   information level based on said amount of information content; and
11   selecting at least one of said intermediate contents and providing
12   information at a selected level.

1   Claim 2. (original) The information providing method according to
2   claim 1, wherein information contained in said content is employed as said
3   intermediate content.

1   Claim 3. (original) The information providing method according to
2   claim 2, wherein information obtained by changing at least a part of said
3   information included in said content is employed as said intermediate
4   content.

1   Claim 4. (original) The information providing method according to
2   claim 3, wherein a condition determined in accordance with a request from a
3   user is defined as said condition that is defined in advance.

1   Claim 5. (original) The information providing method according to
2   claim 4, wherein an intermediate content is selected at a level that
3   corresponds to said condition determined in accordance with said request
4   from said user.

1   Claim 6. (original) The information providing method according to
2   claim 5, wherein a condition for reducing or increasing the amount of
3   information in said content is defined as said condition that is defined in
4   advance.

- 2 -

1   Claim 7. (original) The information providing method according to

2   claim 6, wherein a condition for extracting an information type that

3   represents said content is employed as said condition determined in advance.

1   Claim 8. (original) The information providing method according to

2   claim 7, wherein price information is provided for said contents, and

3   compensation information based on said price information is provided for

4   each of said intermediate contents at said levels that are generated.

1   Claim 9. (currently amended) An information providing apparatus

2   comprising:

3   storage means for storing content that constitutes an entire body of

4   information;

5   connection means for connecting said content to a network so as to

6   provide said content;

7   generation means for, based on a condition determined in advance,

8   generating intermediate contents at a finite number of levels relative to

9   said content, wherein said intermediate contents are hieratically structured

10   according to ~~an amount of information content~~ the number of pages contained

11   therein;

12   means for assigning each of said finite number of intermediate

13   contents an information level based on said amount of information content;

14   and

15   output means for selecting and outputting at least one of said

16   intermediate contents.

1   Claim 10. (original) The information providing apparatus according to

2   claim 9, wherein said generation means employs information included in said

3   content to generate intermediate contents at a finite number of levels.

1   Claim 11. (original) The information providing apparatus according to

2   claim 10, wherein said generation means employs information obtained by

3   changing at least a part of the information included in said content to

4   generate intermediate contents at a finite number of levels.

1   Claim 12. (original) The information providing apparatus according to

2   claim 11, wherein said generation means includes input means for receiving a

3   request from said user, and a condition designated in accordance with said

4   request is employed as said condition determined in advance.

1   Claim 13. (original) The information providing apparatus according to
2   claim 12, wherein said output means selects an intermediate content at a
3   level that corresponds to said condition designated in accordance with said
4   request from said user.

1   Claim 14. (original) The information providing apparatus according to
2   claim 11, wherein said generation means generates said intermediate contents
3   by defining, as said condition determined in advance, a reduction or an
4   increase in the amount of information contained by said content.

1   Claim 15. (original) The information providing apparatus according to
2   claim 14, wherein said generation means generates said intermediate contents
3   by defining, as said condition determined in advance, extraction of an
4   information type that represents said content.

1   Claim 16. (original) The information providing apparatus according to
2   claim 15, further comprising:
3   price storage means for storing said content in correlation of with
4   price information; and
5   compensation means for providing compensation information that is
6   based on said price information for each of said intermediate contents at
7   said levels that are generated.

1   Claim 17. (currently amended) The information providing method
2   according to claim 1, further comprising associating a content price for
3   each of the intermediate contents based on ~~their information content~~ the
4   number of pages contained therein.

1   Claim 18. (currently amended) The information providing apparatus
2   according to claim 9, further comprising a price storage unit configured to
3   associate a content price for each of the intermediate contents based on
4   ~~their information content~~ the number of pages contained therein.

1   Claim 19. (currently amended) The information providing method
2   according to claim 1, further comprising providing a grammatical description
3   of the amount of information contained in said finite number of intermediate
4   contents.

    Claim 20. (canceled)

- 4 -

1   Claim 21. (currently amended)   The information providing apparatus
2 according to claim 9, further comprising means for providing a <u>grammatical</u>
3 description of the amount of information contained in said finite number of
4 intermediate contents.

Claim 22. (canceled)

1   Claim 23. (currently amended)   A computer program product embodied in a
2 tangible media comprising:
3   computer readable program codes coupled to the tangible media for
4 providing, via a network, content that constitutes an entire body of
5 information based on conditions that are defined in advance, the computer
6 readable program codes configured to cause the program to:
7   generate a finite number of intermediate contents for content that
8 corresponds to an entire body of information, wherein said intermediate
9 contents are hieratically structured according to ~~an amount of information~~
10 ~~content~~ <u>the number of pages contained therein</u>;
11   assign each of said finite number of intermediate contents an
12 information level based on said amount of information content; and
13   select at least one of said intermediate contents and providing
14 information at a selected level.

1   Claim 24. (new)   The computer program product according to claim 23,
2 further comprising program codes configured to cause the program to provide a
3 description of the amount of information contained in said finite number of
4 intermediate contents.

1   Claim 25. (new)   The computer program product according to claim 23,
2 further comprising program codes configured to cause the program to associate
3 a content price for each of the intermediate contents based on the number of
4 pages contained therein.